

Message Text

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ACTION L-03

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SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 DHA-02 ORM-01 AF-06 ARA-06 EA-07

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6634

INFO AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

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FROM ALDRICH

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PARM, SW

SUBJECT: CONSULTATIONS WITH SWEDEN ON CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS

1. ALDRICH AND ANDERSON COMPLETED TWO DAYS OF DISCUSSIONS WITH SWEDISH FOREIGN OFFICE AND DEFENSE MINISTRY OFFICIALS. CONSULTATIONS COVERED ALL CATEGORIES OF CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS TO BE CONSIDERED AT FEBRUARY 1976 LUGANO MEETING OF GOVERNMENT EXPERTS AND AT SUBSEQUENT GENEVA CONFERENCE ON LAWS OF WAR. PREDICTABLE SHARP DIFFERENCES OF OPINION EMERGED, BUT THERE WERE SOME INDICATIONS THAT SWEDISH POSITION WAS SOFTENED IN CERTAIN RESPECTS. AT A MINIMUM, SWEDES NOW CLEARLY UNDERSTAND REASONS FOR U.S. POSITIONS.

2. ON INCENDIARIES, SWEDISH EMPHASIS ON PROHIBITING ANTI-PERSONNEL USE AND U.S. INSISTENCE ON IMPORTANCE OF NAPALM
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FOR CLOSE AIR SUPPORT PRESENT IRRECONCILABLE CONFLICT. HYPROCRISY INHERENT IN SWEDISH DESIRE TO BAN MOST INCENDIARIES FOR "HUMANITARIAN" REASONS WHILE RETAINING ANTI-TANK WEAPONS WHICH IN FACT, CAUSE MOST BURNS, BECAME CLEAR.

ON SMALL ARMS, SWEDES CLEARLY HINTED THAT THEY WOULD BE PREPARED TO ABANDON EFFORTS TO PROHIBIT CERTAIN EXISTING SMALL ARMS, SUCH AS M-16, IF THEY COULD OBTAIN MEANINGFUL RESTRAINT ON FUTURE WEAPONS. WE EMPHASIZED NEED FOR MORE EXPERIMENTS AND ANALYSIS BEFORE ANY CONCLUSIONS COULD BE REACHED. SWEDES AGREED WITH US THAT ENERGY DEPOSITED BY A PROJECTILE SEEMS MOST RELEVANT TEST. THEY ARE CONTINUING THEIR TESTS ON ANIMALS, PRESUMABLY TRYING TO DEVELOP STATISTICS MORE IN CONFORMITY WITH THEIR PRECONCEPTIONS THAN EMERGED FROM THE RECENT GOTHENBERG SYMPOSIUM.

3. DISCUSSION OF MINES, BOOBY TRAPS, AND FRAGMENTATION WEAPONS WAS MUCH BRIEFER, REFLECTING PERHAPS LESSER SWEDISH HOPES WITH RESPECT TO THOSE WEAPONS. WE EXPLAINED THOROUGHLY WHY WE COULD NOT ACCEPT PROHIBITION OF CLUSTER BOMBS. SWEDISH MILITARY APPEARED TO AGREE WITH US THAT CLUSTER BOMBS PROBABLY POSE LESS THREAT TO CIVILIANS THAN ANY OTHER WEAPON FOR FLAK SUPPRESSION.

4. SWEDES RAISED QUESTION OF PROPOSED UNGA RESOLUTION ON NAPALM AND OTHER WEAPONS. THEY EXPRESSED STRONG HOPE THAT USG, UK, FRANCE, AND SOVIETS WOULD CHANGE THIS YEAR AND AGREE TO SUPPORT RESOLUTION OF THE TYPE APPROVED BY FIRST COMMITTEE LAST YEAR. WE SAID WE SAW NO USEFUL PURPOSE TO BE SERVED BY SUCH A RESOLUTION AND THAT WE DISLIKED ITS IMPLICIT CONDEMNATION OF NAPALM. WE URGED SWEDES TO CONCENTRATE THEIR ATTENTION ON DEVELOPMENT OF MEANINGFUL AND ACCEPTABLE TREATY PROVISIONS, RATHER THAN SUCH UN GAMESMANSHIP. SWEDES ASSERTED THEIR PRIMARY OBJECTIVE WAS TO COMMIT THE BIG POWERS TO NEGOTIATIONS ON CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS QUESTIONS. WE RESPONDED THAT SUCH RESOLUTIONS ONLY MADE THE MATTER MORE DIFFICULT.

5. DURING COURTESY CALL ON SWEDISH FOREIGN MINISTER, HE EMPHASIZED THE INTEREST OF THE GOVERNMENT IN SUCCESS OF THE NEGOTIATIONS. ALDRICH EXPRESSED SATISFACTION WITH THE BILATERAL TALKS AND URGED THAT OUR FUTURE WORK ON THIS SUBJECT EMPHASIZE FRIENDLY AND COOPERATIVE EXAMINATION OF THE FACTS, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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INCLUDING OUR DEFENSE NEEDS, AND AVOIDANCE OF ANY ATMOSPHERE OF CONFRONTATION. BRIEF MEETING DID NOT PERMIT ELABORATION OF THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN FRIENDLY SWEDISH PRODDING OF THE REST OF THE WEST ON WEAPONS ISSUES AND POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS ROLE AS LEADER OF NON-ALIGNED ACTIVISTS, WHICH SEEMS TO COME MORE NATURALLY TO SWEDISH DELEGATION HEAD AND LEGAL ADVISER HANS BLIX.
GOULD

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